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Community Participation And Innovation For Overcoming School Failure And Dropout: The Voices Of Professionals Engaged In Inclusive Socio-educational Practices

Joana LÚCIO & Fátima ANTUNES

joana.lucio@ie.uminho.pt | fantunes@ie.uminho.pt

CIEd – Research Centre in Education, University of Minho, Portugal



Universidade do Minho
Instituto de Educação
Centro de Investigação em Educação



Project EDUPLACES

Two main research questions:

- What (institutional, community, local) processes/factors, rationales and partnerships contribute, from the point of view of the actors, to building inclusive socioeducational practices?
- What (social, institutional, biographical) processes and factors support the interruption of the school failure/early dropout negative spiral, and favour the remobilization of young people towards learning and building successful educational pathways?

Two emerging research questions:

- How do these socio-educational actors experience, live and understand the issue of equal opportunities in access to knowledge?
- Whose expectations, needs and problems to these practices respond to?

Project EDUPLACES

- **Year I:** Construction of a **Portfolio of Practices**, selected on the basis of criteria stemming from relevant literature and other significant data (e.g. global stats and official reports) and information given by **institutional representatives** through semi-structured interviews and document analysis
- **Year II:** Construction of **Monographies of Practices** and a **Typology of Analysis** of inclusive socioeducational practices, with a broader collection of information about the points of view of **teachers/professionals**, **parents/families**, **children/young people** and **partners**, through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, questionnaires and observation
- **Year III:** Characterization of atypical educational pathways and innovative dimensions in the practices under study

Methodology – Year II



- **Student Grouping:** Focus group discussions and questionnaires
- **Study Support:** Focus group discussions and questionnaires
- **Mediation:** Focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and observation
- **Pedagogical Differentiation:** Focus group discussions

	N	NE	NW	S
FGD Teachers/Professionals	5	2	2	3
FGD Parents	4	2	1	2
FGD Children/Young people	3	3	3	2
FGD Partners	3	--	1	--
Interviews Parents	--	--	9	--
Interviews Partners	--	--	1	--
Questionnaires Children/Young People	36	--	--	46

Focus Group Discussions – Script for Teachers/Professionals



- What are the main obstacles/barriers to the children's success?
- Describe/characterize practice X
- If/how does it help overcoming institutional barriers? Barriers pertaining to their life conditions? Barriers stemming from their experiences?
- What are the practice's strenghts?
- In what ways could this practice be improved?

Focus Group Discussions – Script for Parents

- What are your child's main difficulties in achieving success?
- What is your experience with this practice?
- What main changes has this practice produced in your child?
- How has your interaction with this practice changed over time?
- Identify 3 main positive effects this practice has had in your child's personal and academic life
- If there has been no change, why might that be?
- What could be done differently to improve your child's outcomes?

Focus Group Discussions – Teachers/Professionals and Parents

■ 21 Transcripts:

- 9 North
- 4 North-east
- 3 North-west
- 5 South
- **12 with Teachers/Professionals**
 - 32 participants were teachers
 - 33 were other professionals
 - 3-9 per FGD
- **9 with Parents**
 - 51 participants
 - 2-9 per FGD

Focus Group Discussions – Teachers/Professionals and Parents

- *A priori* category tree: 21 itens

5 nodes/categories

14 subnodes/categories

Category	Frequency (number of references)	Sources
1. Institutional and sociocultural dimensions	889	20
2. Dispositional dimensions	335	20
3. Situational dimensions	393	20
4. Change, transformations and innovation	300	21
5. Partnerships	23	8

Subcategory	Frequency (number of references)	Sources
1.1. Pedagogy, curriculum and evaluation	281	19
1.3. The quality of learning	201	15
3.2. Interactions between schools, families and communities	180	20



Main outcomes

- Prevalence of *Institutional and sociocultural dimensions* (1) and *Pedagogy, curriculum and evaluation* (1.1) seem to suggest that, from the POV of these actors, a more structural, contextual and institutional/sociocultural understanding of the schooling process prevails;
- Prevalence of *Interaction between schools, families and communities* (3.2) over *Communication, negotiation and translation* (3.1) in **Mediation** and **Pedagogical Differentiation** practices may suggest these are successful in that they go beyond communication in a sense of translation and negotiation of meanings, expectations and norms, bringing about evidence of actual joint and articulated work between school, families and communities.

Main outcomes

- *Pedagogy, curriculum and evaluation* (1.1) is the most frequent subcategory across virtually every practice/group of practices **except**: North-eastern region (1.3. *The quality of learning*), community-based projects (3.2. *Interactions between schools, families and communities*) and Parents (also 3.2);
- **Equal opportunities in access to knowledge:**
 - a) Regular academic pathways and pedagogic/scientific quality of learning
 - b) The student's craft (2.2) – language, attitude, behaviour, self-control
- **Expectations, needs and problems:**
 - a) Institutional change, individual change

Main outcomes/issues for further discussion

- Cluster analysis

Practice A	Practice B	Jaccard similarity coefficient	Main distinction
NW_SB_2 (Mediation)	NE_CB (Study Support)	0,952381	2.4. <i>Supporting learning processes that constitute pre-requisites for professional life (in NE_CB)</i>
NE_SB (Student Grouping)	N_CB_2 (Mediation)	0,95	1.3.2. <i>Scientific quality (of learning) (in NE_SB)</i>
S_SB (Pedagogical Differentiation)	NW_SB_2 (Mediation)	0,95	5. <i>Partnerships (in NW_SB_2)</i>

TYPOLOGY OF PRACTICES (Working hypothesis/attributes)		Practices	Nr.
1. Focus of intervention (processes, factors, rationales)	1. Focused on learning the <i>student's craft</i> and the <i>student's role</i>	NE_CB/AE NW_CB/AE NW_SB_2/M N_SB_2/AE S_CB/AE N_SB_1/AA	5/6?
	2. Focused on other (institutional, dispositional and situational) dimensions	NE_SB/AA N_SB_1/AA N_CB_2/M NW_SB_2/M? NW_CB/AE? N_CB_1/M? S_SB/DP?	3/7?
2. Expectations, needs and problems	3. (Defined/expressed by) The school and the professionals	NE_SB/AA N_SB_1/AA N_SB_2/AE NW_SB_2/M S_SB/DP?	5
	4. (Defined/expressed by) The school, the families and the children/young people (negotiation)	NE_CB/AE N_CB_2/M NW_CB/AE S_CB/AE N_CB_1/M?	4/5?
3. Equal opportunities in access to knowledge	5. Questioned/Problematic	NE_SB/AA N_SB_1/AA	2
	6. Reinforced	NE_CB/AE NW_SB_2/M NW_CB/AE N_CB_1/M? N_CB_2/M N_SB_2/AE S_CB/AE S_SB/DP?	8
4. Changes	7. Power relationships	N_CB_2/M N_SB_1/AA S_CB/AE N_CB_1/M?	3/4?
	8. The professionals' work	NE_SB/AA S_CB/AE S_SB/DP?	3?
	9. Individual/ <i>student's role and craft</i>	NW_CB/AE N_SB_1/AA S_CB/AE	3/4?



Issues for further discussion

- References to **partnerships** are almost entirely absent. Do they exist? If so, what kind are they? Who participates? How do they contribute to the practices' daily work and, as such, to overcoming school failure and dropout?
- The issue of **student participation** (or lack thereof): are these practices training children and young people exclusively to perform the student's role/student's craft?
- “Regular” academic pathways are the norm, but Teachers/Professionals voice the need for alternatives; **some curricular flexibility** is exercised, but further information on this “subversion within/of the norm” is necessary



Issues for further discussion

- Whose **expectations, needs and problems** to these practices respond to?
- What other **changes, transformations and innovation** (if not institutional, group or individual) do these practices promote?

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